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# Linked    ❖❖ ❖❖    Lyrics.

BY  
MARIE ASTON.

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## DEDICATION.

TO

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“Oh, for the touch of a vanished hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still.”

868850

## PREFACE.

IN launching this small craft on the ocean of public opinion, the Author wishes to say how sincerely she appreciates the courtesy of those Editors who have kindly given her permission to reprint verses which have formerly appeared in various Magazines.

*Stafford,*

*June, 1887.*

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*VICTORIA REGINA.*

VICTORIA Regina ! thou whose life and reign  
The King of kings so gloriously prolongs,  
Whose royal name is shrined within our hearts, oh !  
    deign

To scan one more of all the loyal songs  
A grateful people hymn thee in this year of praise.

God grant thee health and holy peace while life may  
    last

A kingdom free from turmoil, war, and strife ;  
And when thine earthly joys and sorrows all are past,  
The Heavenly Crown reward thy noble life,  
The palm of victory be thine through endless days.

*WHAT SHALL I SING?*

WHAT shall I sing? ah! could I but know it!  
 Old subjects are worn well-nigh thread-bare,  
 Each gifted bard and talented poet  
 Digs deep in the mine for jewels rare.  
 And I, late-comer, find nought below it,  
 No gem to reward my toil and care.

What shall I sing, and how shall I sing it?  
 Oh! would some kind power a theme impart,  
 Or some grand soul-stirring action bring it,  
 And give me the words to touch *one* heart.  
 Or might some silvery church-bells ring it,  
 Sounding above the noise of the mart.

What shall I sing then? a song all thrilling,  
 Bringing a glow to the souls of men,  
 Or a song of love and joy, instilling  
 Peace to come after the great "And then?"  
 Ah! thoughts come fast, and my heart is willing,  
 Songs on all subjects shall guide my pen.

*DREAMLAND.*

FROM the shadowy haunts of Dreamland stealing,  
 Comes a pageant of the vanished Past,  
 For Time has closed the breach with gifts of healing,  
 And all the ancient glamour round it cast.  
 The well-known forms come crowding round in  
                   numbers,  
 In ne'er-forgotten scenes I live again,  
 While long-lost voices mingle with my slumbers,  
 And thrill me with a pleasure nigh to pain.

The wreathing clouds of Memory grow clearer,  
 The tangled web of thought unwinds apace,  
 An ever-bright'ning halo hovers nearer,  
 Encircling with its light a well-known face;  
 Not cold as last I saw it, gazing blindly,  
 For through the mist of tears I scarce could see,  
 But as of old, while smiling all too kindly  
 Love's fondest look of love it wore for me.

Then with sweet echoes still around me ringing  
 I wake : ah ! this stern Present is no dream :

I don its sober garb of thought, swift flinging  
 To the far distance Mem'ry's sunny gleam :  
 That, only in our visions we may cherish,  
 When dead alike to present joy or grief;  
 The Dreamland Past alone can never perish,  
 And there we seek, nor vainly, for relief.

### *THE FOUR SEASONS.*

IN Life's Spring-time with what gladness  
 Fling we far each thought of care ;  
 What have we to do with sadness,  
 When our world is young and fair ?  
     Shining in the silver dawn  
     Of a violet-scented morn.

Then the Summer's full fruition  
 Brings keen joy and keener pain ;  
 Burning heat of Love's tuition  
 Quenched by sorrow-storms and rain.  
     Manhood in its haughty prime,  
     Gives no heed to fleeting Time.

Comes the Autumn's varied shading,  
 Slowly wraps our hearts around ;  
 While our cherished hopes lie fading  
 Like dead leaves upon the ground.

One by one they drop away,  
 And for them returns no May.

Come the Winter snow-flakes falling  
 Gently on the weary soul :  
 Hear we not a sweet voice calling  
 Us to hasten to our goal ?

Time on its relentless wave  
 Bears us onwards to the grave.

### *THE DAYS OF OLD.*

SWEET is the full fruition of summer's love-tuition,  
 When the sunlight of our fancies shines through a  
     golden haze ;  
 But not so sweet a story as that first flush of glory  
 That glamour'd o'er our spirit in the far-off olden  
     days.

We then were young, and therefore, we asked not  
 “ why, or wherefore ? ”

Believing all the legends of the fairies and the fays ;  
 The fairies now are banished, our faith has likewise  
 vanished,

We are so unbelieving in these new prosaic days.

We looked behind the curtain, and found out how  
 uncertain

Are the rewards of labour, the proud laurels and the  
 bays ;

For when we thought to clasp them, we could not  
 even grasp them,

They glided off like phantoms to the realms of  
 bygone days.

The world went on unheeding ; old Time was also  
 speeding,

And not one stone was laid upon the pile we longed  
 to raise ;

First we were nigh despairing, then we became past  
 caring,

While farther off than ever seemed the dream-like  
 olden days.

The way to Fame's bright heaven was choked with  
human leaven,

Each thought resolved itself into the question "If it  
pays?"

And if a man had money, like bees around their  
honey,

Friends clustered thickly round, in his bright and  
prosperous days.

Success has shadowed o'er us, and men bow down  
before us,

Because our name is noised abroad with all Fame's  
trumpet-blaze,

And now we ponder sadly, for we would give it  
gladly,

To go back to our peaceful youth in those old golden  
days.

### *DAY-DREAMS.*

THE sound of distant bells on summer eve,  
A recollection of some sweet dead Past,  
The scent of sea-weed, thus the fairies weave  
A glamour-spell upon men's souls to cast.

A touch, some half-forgotten word or tone  
 Has power to draw us to a spirit-land ;  
 And there in thought we wander, less alone  
 Than when our earthly flesh clasps hand to hand.

And on the ocean of the great un-rest  
 That surges ever through this wayward life,  
 A subtle peace, like halcyon on nest,  
 Broods o'er the interval 'tween storm and strife.

### *FORSAKEN.*

OUT in the cold of December gloaming,  
 Flits a dark form across the white snow ;  
 Houseless and homeless, restlessly roaming,  
 Where, oh whither, for rest shall she go ?

“ Elves of the river, what see ye to-night ? ”

“ A mortal encompassed by sorrow's might.”

Is it men's voices carelessly mocking,  
 Or the bitter cold wind in her ears,  
 Or but a rush of memory—rocking,  
 Burdened with sounds from the bygone years.

“Elves of the river, what see ye to-night?”

“A poor soul tossed in a turbulent fight.”

Weary brain whirling, throbbing heart burning,

Oh! that those taunting voices would cease!

Here are two roads; which then is the turning?

Down by the river there may be peace.

“Elves of the river, what see ye to-night?”

“A fair woman’s face, floating cold and white.”

### *CHANGE.*

LONG years have passed away since last we met,

We stand beneath the trysting-tree again;

Both vowed at parting never to forget,

The waiting over, why this weary pain?

All is the same that meets our vision’s range,

The sunlight glitters through the sylvan glade,

We two are here; there is no outward change

Since as of old we lingered in this shade.

But you, whose passion-words came fast and free,

Constrain them now, and let thought idly rove.

Yes! *you* are changed; and, shadowed by this tree,

We two stand o’er the grave of buried love.

*A SONG OF THE SEA.*

OVER the restless Ocean,  
Rises the Evening Star,  
Shines on its ceaseless motion,  
Shines on the harbour-bar.

On the blue wavelets tossing,  
Hovers a tiny boat;  
Then the horizon crossing,  
None other is afloat.

Naught but the sea seems moving,  
Ever in deep unrest,  
O'er the once-lov'd and loving,  
Dead 'neath her mighty breast.

Tossing the tangled tresses,  
Laving the cold white hands,  
Moved erewhile in caresses  
Which now clasp yellow sands.

Over the quiet faces,  
Over the still dead feet,  
Now resting from their paces  
Along the busy street.

Many a heart wild-beating  
 The sea hath hushed to rest ;  
 From many a glad meeting  
 Hath filched the welcome guest.

Some who vowed ne'er to sever,  
 Lie 'midst her corals red ;  
 Parted ever and ever,  
 Till she "gives up her dead."

Over her victims rolling,  
 Her blue waves surge and swell,  
 Crowning an endless tolling,  
 A dirge-like passing-bell.

Now the pale moonbeams stealing  
 With silver crown the waves,  
 Flowing along unfeeling  
 Over the countless graves.

When will it end its groaning,  
 When will the weary rest ?  
 Peace to the mournful moaning !  
 "In cœlo quies est."

*IN THE FIRELIGHT.*

DRIFTING along like a rapid river,  
Passing like dreams in the morning light;  
Countless as aspen leaves when they shiver,  
The strange thoughts thronging o'er me to-night.

Brought from the Past whence is no returning,  
Culled from the ages for ever gone;  
Touched sometimes with the bitter heart burning  
Uppermost now in the present lone.

Now and again comes a ghostly glimmer  
Of faces lost for many a year,  
Which, while I gaze, become faint and dimmer,  
Never again shall I see them near.

Out on the streets the joy-bells are ringing  
The same sweet notes as in olden times,  
Many a thought to my tired heart bringing,  
Besides the message of Christmas chimes.

Visions of days when a faith I cherished,  
Unwitting then of this world's cold creed,  
Then of a time when that trust had perished,  
Leaning too long on a broken reed.

All past and over the restless roaming,  
Dull fruition succeeding desire ;  
I sit alone in the quiet gloaming,  
Weaving my web of thought by the fire.

*THE TIME OF ROSES.*

SUMMER time had passed away,  
And yet Love lingered on,  
Then a drear November day  
Found one sweet maid alone.  
Through the woods she heard Love's song,  
"Never, never, stay I long,  
Save in the time of roses."

"He will come again" she said,  
"When Winter days are here ;"  
But the Winter came and fled,  
And Love did not appear.  
Said she sadly, "Nevermore  
Can return the days of yore,  
It was my time of roses."

But when Summer came again,  
 Love followed laughing too ;  
 At the sight sad grief and pain  
 Away together flew.  
 “ Now,” quoth Love, “ I come to stay,  
 Prithee send me not away,  
 This *is* our time of roses.”

### *WRECKED.*

WILDLY the storm-wind howls over the sea,  
 Deeking the dark waves with wreathes of white foam,  
 Wafting it far on the shivering lea,  
 In cold salt-spray gusts to our island home.

Dimly the fishing-smacks loom on the shore,  
 Surely the “ Molly Bawn ” ’s not in her place !  
 Oh ! that the darkness would lift, and once more  
 I might catch a glimpse of a well-known face.

Is that a ship beating out on the bar,  
 The vessel that owns my Denis for mate ?  
 “ The Lifeboat ! ” “ ’Twere madness to venture so far.”  
 God’s pity on those who must stand and wait !

Nought but black darkness ; the bleak wind and spray  
 Wrapping me round like a cloak as I stand ;  
 But far better *that* than the glaring day,  
 And the cold dead body it brought to land.

### *BROKEN BONDS.*

A LONELY tarn upon a mountain-side,  
 Waveless and lying ever deep and still ;  
 So motionless it might for aye abide,  
 Kept silent by its own relentless will.  
 A start—a shiver—the tarn has risen,  
 And it turns down the mountain side to flee,  
 The long pent-up force has burst its prison,  
 It glides away now to the boundless sea.

A lonely soul out in the cold of life,  
 Knowing not where to turn for friendship sweet ;  
 What wonder it should weary of the strife,  
 Longing to rest the torn and bruised feet ?  
 But for it, like the tarn, there comes a day,  
 A refuge haven to which it may flee,  
 And a pure white soul wings forth on its way  
 To the distant shores of Eternity.

*A LONG-LOST SON.*

WILL he come in the gloaming, when birds are home-  
ward roaming,

When flowers give forth their incense, and the night  
grows cool and chill ;

Or in the early morning, when eastern light is  
dawning,

And every songster trying which can give the  
sweetest trill ?

Years more than I can number, but hope doth not  
yet slumber,

Have sauntered past me slowly, since I watched him  
from this door ;

Sad thoughts come oft up-springing, I hear wild  
echoes ringing,

“ Wait not, O weary mother, he will come to thee no  
more.”

I go on hoping, fearing, and wait for his appearing,  
My eyes are dim with watching, but I'll see him from  
afar ;

In the window there's a light, shining clear and far  
at night,

No matter when he cometh, he shall find the gate ajar.

So whether in the gloaming that homewards he comes  
roaming,

Or in the silent starlight when I hear each lightest  
breath,

I'll watch, however weary, I'll wait, however dreary,  
But oh! my son, come quickly, lest my heart be cold  
in death.

### *EUCHARIS.*

Oh! Eucharis, my pure pale lily-flower,  
My little babe with snow-white face; and eyes  
Of deep dark blue, as when a passing shower  
Hath cleared away the clouds from summer skies.

Fair Eucharis, my maid of eighteen years,  
All shyly listening to words of love;  
Coming to me with tender happy tears,  
Content if only I her choice approve.

Sweet Eucharis, by thy flower-strewn couch I stand,  
 God's Hand hath gathered thee, and I must bow ;  
 Full meet wert thou to join the Angel-band,  
 Ne'er didst thou look so pure and white as *now*.

### CONSOLATION.

Al! how vain the weary longing  
 For the joys of bygone days ;  
 Vain the bitter tears that, thronging,  
 Hide the present from our gaze.

In the Past we love to linger  
 For the Present is so lone ;  
 Till our hearts, beneath Time's finger,  
 Beat to rest against a stone.

Vain the fancy, oft returning,  
 " Could we live the Past again !"  
 While the might-have-been is burning  
 Words of fire across our brain.

Oh ! ye stricken ones and weary,  
 Will nought soothe your wild unrest ?  
 Look around ! *all* is not dreary,  
 And " whatever is, is best."

*A LIFE.*

“Not for long shall we be parted,  
Trust in me whate’er you hear;  
Think of me as all true-hearted,  
Till again you see me near.”

Thus he spoke, and left her standing  
Sad and lonely on the shore,  
Till she slowly crossed the landing,  
Turned her face to home once more.

There through years of silent sorrow,  
Calm and true she waited on;  
Waited for that glad to-morrow  
To illumine the darkness gone.

Came at last the fatal letter  
Telling of a far-off grave  
Where he, who did ne’er forget her,  
Low was laid by comrades brave.

Then we see her lonely crossing  
T’wards the East the ocean main,  
Finding in the tempest-tossing  
Some relief from weary pain.

And the peace she sought came o'er her  
 As she stood beside his grave ;  
 For she saw her work before her,  
 Sick to tend and souls to save.

'Midst the wounded and the dying  
 Moved she like an angel blest,  
 Till a stray shot, aimless flying,  
 Oped for her the way to rest.

“ *FOUND DEAD.* ”

ONLY a fair and well-remembered face,  
 Yet half-strange in its look of sudden peace ;  
 The sweet lips smiling with the softened grace  
 That comes to many when life-troubles cease.

Tired feet that in old days were wont to lurk  
 With stronger ones along the quiet lane ;  
 Two little hands set free from toil and work,  
 A weary worn-out heart at rest from pain.

So fair, so young, so weary, and so *dead*,  
 Upon our souls some longing wonders throng ;  
 Shall we know *thee* again, if over-head  
 We meet in the Eternal Land of Song.

*THE OTHER SIDE.*

AFTER the burden of sin and life,  
 The longing for something more,  
 Wrecked on the sorrow and care and strife,  
 Lurking like rocks near the shore.  
 After the toiling for things denied,  
 We shall find rest on the other side.

Rest beyond all we can know or think  
 In these gloomy hours of night ;  
 We stand at last on the river's brink,  
 And gaze on the dazzling Light.  
 Life's bark sails joyously with the tide,  
 We shall find rest on the other side.

*RELICS.*

LOOK them over ! time-worn letters,  
 Read so oft in days of yore ;  
 Hair that bound in silken fetters,  
 Adding now to memory-store.

Scented flowers, love-language sweetest,  
 Telling of affection true ;  
 Burn them all ! it now were meetest  
 To hoard up dead leaves and rue.

Shrivelled now each faded token,  
 Love-locks curling in the flame ;  
 Vows made only to be broken,  
 Are not worthy of the name.

### *AN OLD WOMAN'S STORY.*

YOU wonder why should linger, unhealed by Time's  
     soft finger,  
 The mem'ry of a sorrow that has saddened all my  
     life ?  
 Come hither, child, and hearken ; while evening  
     shadows darken,  
 I'll tell you why, through all these years, no man has  
     called me wife.

I was a village maiden, my foolish head o'erladen  
 With visions and romances from the days of long ago ;

When gallants gay and knightly would peril life full  
lightly,

For favour of some lady careless risking weal or woe.

I had a sailor lover, and ne'er did bunting cover

A truer or a braver lad ; his like I'll never see ;

But when he came a-praying, to wed me in the  
Maying,

I told him I would find a test to prove his love for me.

His look of joy and gladness gave way to honest  
sadness,

“True love requires no test, my lass ! fine words I  
cannot say :

I come of simple seamen, but none of Nature's gleemen  
E'er made a truer love than mine the theme of courtly  
lay.”

But vain was all his pleading ; I turned away  
unheeding ;

“Unless,” said I, “you give me proof, with you I  
will not wed.

I ask no deed of daring, but if for me you're caring,  
Then cross the sea, and bring to me some beads of  
coral red.”

Next noon till daylight faded, with face all sorrow-  
 shaded,  
 For already I repented, I watched them leave the bay;  
 I saw the good ship sailing, my heart within me failing,  
 Lest he whom I had banished, should return no more  
 for aye.

Long months passed slowly o'er us, and then again  
 before us  
 We saw the vessel coming in, and raised a shout of joy;  
 Then all together banding we hastened to the landing,  
 I laughing at my foolish fears about my sailor boy.

But all my eager gazing found not his head upraising,  
 Then sadly one stepped forward when the men had  
 come to land,  
 And told how they had left him, when Death of Life  
 bereft him,  
 Laid lowly in a lonely grave on a far distant strand.

And how when he was dying, in pain and sorrow lying,  
 He gave to them these coral beads, and with his latest  
 breath,  
 Charged them to take them duly, to her he loved so  
 truly:  
 Ah me! to gratify my pride, I sent him to his death.

*MISUNDERSTANDINGS.*

A rosy flush athwart the western sky,  
 The distant murmur of a woodland stream,  
 A glimpse through interlacing branches high,  
 Of fleecy gold-edged clouds and sunset gleam.  
 Two lovers whispering by a rustic stile,  
 Where other loves were told in bygone years;  
 A girl who kept her tryst with glad sweet smile,  
 And went from thence with bitter heartfelt tears.

A few short words, and spoken half in jest,  
 But they let loose a flood of jealous fear,  
 "Since thus you think, it might for both be best,  
 That we should part for ever, now, and here."

The sunlight fades, and all is grey and chill,  
 With backward looks the twain move separate ways,  
 One down the vale, the other up the hill,  
 To meet as strangers henceforth, all their days.

*LOVED AND LOST.*

THE grass was green and dry, love,  
 And bright the purple heather,

The day that you and I, love,  
First trod these hills together.  
You watched the sunset glowing  
Behind the mountain peak,  
*I* only saw the flowing  
Of lovelight to your cheek.

The heath is sodden wet, love,  
And Autumn leaves are falling,  
But here I linger yet, love,  
The sweet sad Past recalling,  
My heart and I are lonely,  
And still no love I crave,  
For thine that I prized only  
Lies with thee in the grave.

### *LIFE.*

LIFE—a book of once blank pages,  
A beginning, but no end,  
Written on by countless sages,  
Who, like meteors, lustre lend.

They too, vanish, but their glory  
Lingers to the end of Time,  
They may perish, but their story  
Lives again in prose and rhyme.

For on them the early dawning  
Of Immortal Genius shone ;  
And for them the veil of morning  
Lifted o'er the darkness gone.

We but gaze with ceaseless longing  
That we too, might make a name,  
'Midst the thousands ever thronging  
On the road that leads to Fame.

Yet our time is not all wasted,  
It is noble to aspire,  
Though success may ne'er be tasted,  
Nought but Failure meet desire.

Though we fail, each lofty feeling  
Lifts us higher than the past,  
May-be Fortune, justice dealing,  
Brings us to our goal at last.

*THE OLD HOUSE.*

I SEE the old house standing grandly solemn,  
 For from the mullioned windows shines no light,  
 While buttress deep and ivy-covered column  
 Loom forth into the darkness of the night.

I see once more the dear old-fashioned garden  
 All bright and gay with many-coloured flowers,  
 While in the midst the sun-dial, grim old warden,  
 Reminds me mockingly of vanished hours.

I see thine eyes with teardrops brightly glisten  
 As when we parted on that summer day ;  
 I see—but hark ! a hidden voice : I listen,  
 “ The day breaks and the shadows flee away.”

*SEED TIME AND HARVEST.*

ALL among the sweet white violets, the young leaves  
                   and the lambs,  
 Nature, our minds included, of a bright and verdant  
                   green ;

For in youth we are Life's "fresh-men," and as for  
any shams,  
We leave them to those knowing ones who go behind  
the scene.

All among the roses, feathery meadow-sweet and dust,  
Nature becoming more mature, ourselves a trifle wise:  
'Tis not because we try to be, perforce because we must,  
When once the scales of innocence drop from our  
youthful eyes.

All among the juicy fruit, the red poppies and the corn,  
Nature in joyous gladness, our poor selves a little sad;  
The gilt is off the Gingerbread we bought at early  
morn,

And we try to hide its bareness, pretending we are glad.

All among the holly green, robin redbreasts, and the  
snow,

Nature all silvered over, like our own hair, very  
white ;

We are happy on the whole ; 'tis a good world as  
worlds go,

But it will not now be long ere 'tis time to say "good  
night."

*A MISSING SHIP.*

WHAT scenes of horror hang around the words !  
Visions of hunger, madness, pain, and thirst  
Pierce through the hearts of friends like very swords,  
Who sadly sit at home and fear the worst ;  
Picturing to themselves the mortal strife  
Too surely raging on the distant main,  
Where every man is struggling for dear life,  
With little hope of seeing land again.

Without a thought of fear they sailed away,  
The gallant ship with all her canvas spread,  
Nor guessed it was their last course through the bay,  
Or that they went a voyage to the dead.  
And now the lovely cruel sea looks fair,  
But they will cross the blue salt waves no more,  
Nor tended be with ceaseless loving care,  
By all those grieving watchers on the shore.

Who shade their sun-dazed eyes with weary hand,  
And seaward gaze with nervous trembling lip,  
If haply any boat that nears the strand  
May bring them tidings of the missing ship.

At last the weary vigil has an end,  
 "Lost, with all hands on board," the verdict comes,  
 And with the passing strength despair may lend,  
 They sadly seek their now-deserted homes.

### *THE ABBOT.*

UPON a sea-girt isle in ancient times  
 There stood a Monastery, old and grey  
 Its wave-defying walls and towers, and washed  
 By ocean spray. Within it, holy men  
 Their vigils kept and daily praises sang.  
 Upon them there had fallen a great grief;  
 The death of their good Abbot. It was thus :  
 The bell rang out for matins, and the sound  
 Of distant chant was borne upon the air,  
 As nearer the procession came, until  
 The monks passed through the doorway, one by one.  
 Hushed was the chant as on their knees they fell,  
 Then in a minute more, in glorious tones,  
 The organ pealed : the restless sea outside  
 Kept up a constant moaning ; while the monks

With deep rich voices sang the De Profundis.  
 And one there was, the noblest of them all,  
 With pale sad face and eyes that seldom smiled,  
 Upon whose brow a Heavenly peace was throned,  
 As one who knew he soon should win his rest,  
 And knowing, triumphed. Ever and anon  
 He pressed his hand upon his heart, as though  
 He sought to quell an oft-recurring pain.  
 "Kyrie Eleison," the grand notes rang out  
 Up to the vaulted roof; he raised his head,  
 And gazed upon the golden Altar Cross  
 As if he fain would pierce the veil beyond.  
 "Christe Eleison," and a look of joy  
 Gave an unearthly beauty to his face.  
 And when the last sweet note had ceased he bowed  
 His head upon his hands as though in prayer.  
 But when they came to raise him, he was dead.

. . . . .

'Tis evening, and the Chapel stands in gloom,  
 Dark shadows fall upon the darker floor :  
 Before the Altar on a bier he lies,  
 Shrouded with velvet pall ; his noble face  
 Transfigured by a smile, his thin white hands

Crossed on his breast as though he still would pray.  
 But see ! a ray of silver moonlight steals  
 Through the large window of rich stained glass,  
 And in a many-coloured glory falls  
 Upon the dead man's face. Then it expands  
 Through the whole Chapel : chancel, choir, and nave  
 Are flooded with its radiance : carvings,  
 Sculptured wreathings stand out clear as daylight.  
 The blaze of glory fades ; slowly the light  
 Recedes, and all again is cold and grey,  
 Save for the ray which lingers in the East,  
 And flickers on his face, as though to guard  
 The earthly remnant of the mighty dead.

### *THE DEATH OF MOSES.*

NOT renowned in Scripture story  
 Is the place where Moses dies ;  
 Nor surrounded with earth-glory,  
 God alone knows where he lies,  
 Somewhere 'mongst the mountains hoary,  
 'Neath the sunny Eastern skies.

There the Jewish Leader, sleeping,  
 Waits the last dread trumpet sound ;  
 Till the angels, harvest-reaping,  
 Gather in the dead around,  
 An Eternal Eye is keeping  
 Watch upon the unknown ground.

He, the promised Land foretasting  
 From the heights, before his death,  
 To a better Land was hasting,  
 As he drew his latest breath.  
 Not *alone* ; the Everlasting  
 Mighty Arms were underneath.

### *THEN AND NOW.*

NOT from out the earthquake crashes,  
 Nor amid the fiery flashes,  
 Spake God to Elijah's soul ;  
 But a still small voice of healing,  
 Soothing each rebellious feeling,  
 O'er his weary spirit stole.

Not with sounds of mighty thunders,  
 Not with awe-inspiring wonders,  
 Shows He *us* the narrow way :  
 But with words of solemn warning  
 Leads us onward to the dawning  
 Of the Great Eternal Day.

*THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW.*

THROUGH the dark shadow valley I am hasting,  
 And all my past life fadeth like a dream,  
 The while my fevered pulses, rapid wasting,  
 Beat fainter as I near Death's narrow stream.  
 I see its icy waters dimly glisten,  
 A terror seizes me, I fain would flee,  
 But then I hear a voice, and turning, listen ;  
 'Tis Death's dark Angel speaking unto me :  
 " Take thou mine hand, and cross the flood beside  
     me,  
 And in my grasp I'll bear thee quickly o'er,  
 And whatsoever peril shall betide thee  
 Shall seem as nought when thou hast reached the  
     shore."

Then soft and slow the cold flood closes o'er me,  
 And wraps me in its gloomy hues of night,  
 But now the Golden City shines before me,  
 And I shall soon be safe within its light.

*THE ANGELS OF LIFE, DEATH, AND  
 RESURRECTION.*

MUSING, I sat beside a running stream,  
 When sleep came to me with a strange sweet dream.

I rested on a cloud of burnished gold,  
 There came a sense of hidden presence o'er me,  
 And, looming through the mist that did enfold,  
 Three shining figures stood at last before me.

Clad in pure robes of stainless dazzling whiteness,  
 With folded wings that told of present peace;  
 Scarce could I bear the glory and the brightness,  
 Then rose a voice; I moved not till its cease.

“Angel of Life am I,” it said, “and ever  
 I guide the failing steps of mortal men,

From cradle to the grave whose portals sever  
 All earthly ties and hopes from earthly ken.  
 My hands receive all doles of joy or sorrow,  
 Love, hope, and rest, or anguish, grief, and pain,  
 Whiche'er He wills to deal, till that Great Morrow  
 Shall show how much was loss, and how much gain."

Then stepped the second forth with cold slow tone,  
 "*Some time*, each man must stand with me alone,  
 For I am Death's dark Angel, and my power  
 Extends o'er mortals in the last dread hour.  
 And some upon me fain their doors would close;  
 It matters not; I needs must visit those  
 To whom He wills to send Who knoweth best;  
 But some receive me as a welcome guest."

Then came upon me a dim recollection  
 I knew the third who stood before mine eyes:  
 It was the Angel of the Resurrection,  
 Who last addressed me in this wondrous guise.

"On the glorious Resurrection morning,  
 When parted souls and bodies meet again,  
 I shall be there to lead them to the dawning  
 Of endless peace and love, or endless pain.

Not mine the Hand, which shall, their sentence  
dealing,

Place them in heights of Heaven or depths of hell,  
But mine to bring them to the Great Unsealing  
Which shall decide their fate—till then, farewell.”

I woke; to the far distance fled my dream,  
And still I mused beside the rapid stream.

### *VISIONS.*

DOES the thought of scented heather  
Ever pass across thy mind ?  
Azure skies and sunny weather  
From the days left far behind.  
Dost thou think of that fair river  
On whose banks we walked of yore,  
Or of that low-breathed “for ever !”  
Lasting just a year—no more !

Or hast thou in drinking madly  
Of that other Lethe stream,  
All forgotten ? slowly, sadly,  
It receded into a dream.

Day by day and widening ever,  
 Our paths grow more far apart,  
 Mine lies by the quiet river,  
 Thine, within the busy mart.

Never more by pathways shaded,  
 Shall we wander hand in hand,  
 While the rose leaves, now all faded,  
 Shower round us where we stand.  
 And do I regret? I know not,  
 For whatever is, is best;  
 Shall I e'er forget? I trow not,  
 Till earth's storm-tossed hearts shall rest.

### *YOUTH AND AGE.*

Ah! how sweet Life's young romances,  
 Starry nights, the moon's soft beams,  
 When the love-light from our fancies  
 Casts a halo o'er our dreams.

Sad it is that in old age,

Blots should stain the once fair page.

In Life's journey, cares increasing  
 Swallow up maturer years,  
 Life is but a round unceasing,  
 Made of loves and hopes and fears.  
     Late, the old man, looking back,  
     Sorrows over youth's lost track.

*FOOT-PRINTS.*

FOOTSTEPS are for ever fleeting  
 On the shifting sands of Life,  
 Sometimes passing, sometimes meeting,  
 Thronging to the endless strife.

Long-lost sounds of angel voices  
 Mingle with the busy stream,  
 And the aching heart rejoices  
 Even though it be a dream.

Though the "madding crowd" divides us,  
 Lost ones seem so very near,  
 And we think, whate'er betides us,  
 We will keep their memory dear.

But the world, in round unceasing,  
 Draws us ever far away,  
 And our grief, while unappeasing,  
 May wait till another day.

### *CHRISTMAS BELLS.*

I LEAN from out my lattice in the night,  
 To hear the song of joyous happy bells,  
 That story of glad tidings: the true Light  
 Which even finds its way to prison cells.

To you is born  
 This happy morn,  
 A Saviour who will guard you in the fight.

Heedless of cold, or icy frost and snow,  
 I watch the ceaseless tide of city life,  
 And suddenly I hear from far below,  
 The distant echoes of some quarrel rife.

The bells say "Cease!"  
 He is True Peace,  
 Your Saviour came not to bring war and strife.

If lingers any illwill from the Past,  
 Uproot it all, and let it aye be gone,  
 How, 'neath the Eye of Him can quarrels last,  
 Who prayed His Father to forgive men's scorn?  
     The bells still ring,  
     The Angels sing,  
 And peace and joy reign on this Christmas morn.

### *THE THAMES.*

ON! cold and cruel calmly-flowing river,  
 Bearing rich-freighted vessels to the sea;  
 I gaze on thee until an icy shiver  
 Creeps like a growing terror over me.

How many souls hast lured to their destruction?  
 Blackened and stained by city toil and crime,  
 To lie forgotten till the Resurrection  
 Shall show them doomed, or happy for all Time.

How many songs of sinful mirth and gladness  
 Have floated o'er thee in the dim dark night?  
 How many prayers of patient heartfelt sadness  
 From weary workers toiling t'wards the light.

. . . . .  
 Majestic, brilliant, world-famed, mighty river,  
 Gliding past stately homes and verdant lawns,  
 Upon whose banks the reeds and rushes quiver,  
 And songsters carol soon as morning dawns.

Some of those lordly halls by which you linger,  
 Are full of all that makes a "Home, sweet home,"  
 Love, happiness, the theme of song and singer,  
 'Midst treasures brought from many a foreign dome.

Then still flow on, oh! lovely *two-faced* river!  
 Let city-toilers live their troubles down;  
 In this world, sweet and bitter mingle ever,  
 "God made the country, and man made the town."

### THE WOOD.

AMID the trees, Spring-clad in robes of green,  
 I wander aimlessly in happy mood,  
 Looking with tender eyes upon the scene,  
 It is so fresh and fair, this English wood.

Comes summer time, and as in other days,  
 I stroll beneath tall trees, and spreading bough,  
 But one is with me, and on *her* I gaze,  
 I do not heed the sylvan glories now.

Once more I wander sadly all alone,  
 Rich brilliant colours hover all around,  
 I see them through a mist; my love is gone,  
 I walk in dreams, with eyes fixed on the ground.

Then winter comes; I pace the wood again,  
 Trying to ease the dull, yet aching, smart;  
 The bare brown wind-tossed branches mock my  
     pain,  
 'Tis winter in the wood, and in my heart.

#### *A FAREWELL.*

DRIFTING, ah! drifting out of this sweet life,  
 In the bright Spring, with all so fresh and fair,  
 The dewy morning breeze with incense rife,  
 While song-birds with glad carols fill the air.

And I must leave it all, ah me ! and glide  
 Down the dark stream to the deep shades of  
     night,  
 Life's current ebbing slowly with the tide,  
 Until "at eventime, it shall be light."

And thou, mine own sweet one, I sadly think  
 How hard it is to part and leave thee here,  
 Lay thy dear hand in mine, for on the brink  
 Of icy floods I stand, and Death is near.

As the sun sets in the far crimson west,  
 My bark will merge into the trackless sea,  
 And then my world-worn spirit shall find rest  
 On the bright shores of an Eternity.

### *A WOMAN'S TRUST.*

THEY stood at the gate till the hour waxed late,  
 And the time of parting drew near ;  
 Full well might they stand : he would clasp her  
     hand  
 No more for many a year.

“’Tis Kismet,” she said, and bowed her head,  
As she thought of the lonely days  
That must come and pass, like leaves on the grass,  
Before she would meet his gaze.

And how the time flew, she never quite knew,  
But at last the meeting drew nigh;  
With love-lighted face, she went to the place,  
To watch for his passing-by.

And at length he came, but ah! that such shame  
Should rest on man’s honour and life;  
For a love more fair he brought with him there,  
And he called this last one “*wife!*”



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